





An almost new PCC car crosses the intersection of Hennepin and Washington in 1948. Judging from the color photos we have, the streetcar yellow seems to vary from a creamy shade seen here, to a more lemony shade, as on the front cover. George Krambles photo, Krambles-Peterson Archive collection.

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Corrections & new info

Snow plow #16 sold to Aberdeen, South Dakota was built about 1895, not 1915.

Russ Olson comments that the photo in the Lowry private car on page 18 is rare. "Apparently looking toward the rear platform before the kitchen/toilet was added which also required the rear bulkhead to be rebuilt. Compare the two photos. I wonder if this work could have been done in preparation for President McKinley's visit to the Twin Cities in 1901."

Mark Sims adds some info on cars sold second hand. "According to the Grand Forks Street Railway Corporate Records in the University of North Dakota Special Collections, these were the cars.

Trailer 2 (ex TCRT 1610) scrapped 1913

Trailer 4 (ex 1613) scrapped November 1926

Trailer 6 (ex 1626) Scrapped July 1929

Trailer 8 (ex 1630) scrapped August 1929

Cars sold to Oskaloosa Traction & Light were numbered 9, 11 and 13. I haven't found any records showing when they were scrapped."

The Bryant Avenue Line

-Aaron Isaacs

The horsecar predecessor of the Bryant Avenue line was the first to serve the Loring Park and Lowry Hill neighborhoods southwest of downtown Minneapolis. In 1884 it built out

Hennepin Avenue to the crossing of Lyndale Avenue, which would become known as the Bottleneck. From there it extended out Lyndale to 27th Street, then west to Dupont Avenue and south on Dupont to 45th Street. It ended on 45th near the east shore of Lake Harriet. In the horse car era, most lines had their own carbarn. The Lyndale (also called Windom) carbarn was built at 28th and Dupont.

The extension to 45th Street was intended to serve an isolated development of large houses. The extension was too far too soon. It experienced low ridership, plus the difficulty of climbing steep hills between 38th and 40th Streets. It also crossed the existing Minneapolis Lyndale & Minnetonka, the Motor Line, at 31st and Dupont. For these reasons it was cut back to the 28th Street carbarn in 1887. Freed from having to go south, the line was extended west on 27th Street a half mile to Irving Avenue, a couple of blocks short of the swamp that would become Lake of the Isles.

The post-electrification shuffle

As the Minneapolis streetcars electrified in 1890-91, the Minneapolis Street Railway seemed to be confused about where to end the Lyndale Avenue line. In 1890 it removed the narrow gauge horse car tracks from 27th Street and replaced them the standard gauge tracks on 28th Street, but only as far west as Hennepin Avenue.

In 1891 a new line opened on Hennepin Avenue from the Bottleneck to 31st Street, and the Lake Harriet line, which had used Nicollet to 31st Street, was diverted over it. That made the track on 28th Street redundant and it was abandoned, along with the



Lyndale Carbarn. Now electrified, the old Motor Line on Nicollet Avenue continued to operate a branch on 31st Street to Hennepin.

New track was built on Lyndale from 28th Street to 31st Street, west on the existing track two blocks to Bryant Avenue, and out Bryant to 38th Street. That would be the end of the line until it was extended to 46th Street in 1893.

In 1905 the new Lake Street crosstown line was opened across south Minneapolis. That allowed the

Front cover: This issue follows the Bryant line from downtown to its south Minneapolis terminals. Like the Como-Harriet, it was well patronized. Here a full southbound car climbs through the Bottleneck past St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral.

Above right: During the horsecar era, the line temporarily served the neighborhoods east of Lake of the Isles and Lake Harriet.



abandonment of the former Motor Line on 31st Street from Nicollet to Hennepin. The Bryant line was shifted, using the new Lake Street tracks from Lyndale to Bryant, then a new block of track from Lake Street to 31st Street.

The Bryant line would see three more extensions:

- In 1911 to 50th and Bryant
- In 1927 west on 50th to Penn and south on Penn to 54th Street
- In 1931 south on Bryant to 56th Street

At 50th & Penn the extension intersected with the end of the Oak-Harriet line, which had arrived in 1913. This created a transfer post for trips within southwest Minneapolis, but it probably received little use. As a rule, the Bryant-Penn cars didn't use the 50th & Penn wye.

The Penn Avenue extension traversed a series of short, steep hills, on 50th Street from Dupont to Fremont and from Logan to Newton, and on Penn crossing Minnehaha Creek. There was one other hill that should have been unnecessary. Three legs of the 54th & Penn intersection are basically level. TCRT put its wye on the east leg, which is located on a 6 percent downhill grade. Although we don't have documentation, on one or two occasions a streetcar is reported to



Above: Roughly half of the Bryant cars terminated downtown instead of continuing across the Mississippi to northeast Minneapolis. The downtown cars looped via 3rd Street to 1st Avenue N., then shared a layover at 1st Street with the Como-Harriet downtown cars. This one has just turned onto 1st Street to return to Hennepin for its trip south. Bill Olsen photo.

Left: A southbound car on Hennepin between 5th and 6th Streets, both major transfer points.



Until 1934, the Bryant line turned off Hennepin Avenue at 11th Street and followed 1st Avenue N. through downtown. This is the intersection of 7th Street, with the Glenwood line diverging at left. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

have rolled off the end of the wye and continued another block to the bottom of the hill.

The 1931 Bryant Avenue extension to 56th Street had been controversial for several years before it happened. Housing was being built south of Minnehaha Creek. The question was how to reach it. There were two pro-

posals.

- On Bryant Avenue
- On 56th Street, as a branch off the Nicollet Avenue line.

TCRT favored the Bryant option, but it required a new bridge over Minnehaha Creek. The Minneapolis Park Board opposed it and went to court to try and stop it. It was also

opposed by the residents along Bryant north of the creek. Those objections weren't enough to stop it. The multi-arched reinforced concrete bridge carried a single gauntlet track to minimize its width. There was no sidewalk, so an adjacent steel arch pedestrian bridge was built that still stands.

The Minneapolis City Market, predecessor of today's Minneapolis Farmers Market, was located at 10th Street and Hawthorne Avenue, behind the Orpheum Theater. Market traffic delayed the Bryant streetcars, which passed through downtown on 1st Avenue N. In 1934 TCRT shifted the line to Hennepin Avenue. Merchants along 1st Avenue N. objected to the loss of service. To settle the issue, the City took a poll of riders. They voted 8000 to 1500 in favor of Hennepin, and that's where the Bryant-Johnson stayed for the rest of its existence. It shared Hennepin with the Bryn Mawr, Kenwood and St. Louis Park lines, but they were converted to bus by 1940. Thereafter it continued to share Hennepin with the Como-Harriet, Como-Hopkins and Oak-Harriet lines.

The Bryant Line settled into a routine of 10 minute frequency, with trips alternating between the 54th & Penn and Bryant-56th branches. This was augmented by extra rush hour service to 38th Street or 50th & Bryant.

For the first two years of electric operation in 1890-91, the Bryant line ended downtown. From 1891 to 1920, it was through-routed with the Monroe line, which ended at Washington Street NE and 17th Avenue. Thereafter it was paired with Johnson Street NE until conversion to bus in 1953. Although it extends into the suburbs on both ends, it remains the Bryant-Johnson bus to this day and its route within Minneapolis remains unchanged.



Here's the 600 block of Hennepin Avenue, viewed from both directions.

Above: Looking west from 6th Street on a snowy winter day.

Opposite: Clark Gable is on the screen at the Gopher Theater as passengers stand in the street (the supposed Safety Zone) to board a Bryant-Penn car to 54th Street. Following is the Bryant car to 56th Street. The Kenwood-St. Louis Park bus loads at the curb.

Both Minneapolis Star-Tribune photos, Minnesota Historical Society collection.





Above: Moving south on Hennepin Avenue, this is the intersection of 8th Street looking south. Norton & Peel photo.

Left: Passengers headed for Johnson Street NE board at 9th Street by the Orpheum Theater and the Land of Lakes Coney Island. Jim Kreuzberger photo.



The view looking north from the upper floors of the Minneapolis Central Library attracted multiple photographers, in this case Don Berg.



Above: This is the joint downtown layover for Como-Harriet, Oak-Harriet and Bryant cars on 1st Avenue N. at 1st Street next to the Allied Van Lines building. Dick Rumbolz photo.

Below: This northbound car is at the opposite end of downtown, on Hennepin at 16th Street. The Basilica of St. Mary rises beyond the commercial buildings. This is one of 133 photos in our collection by visiting California trolley fan Wilbur Whittaker.





The massive uncontrolled intersection of Hennepin and Lyndale Avenues known as "The Bottleneck" was traffic anarchy as vehicles worked their way through it and hoped to emerge on the other side unscathed. This is where the Bryant and Harriet lines came together, joined in earlier years by the Kenwood, St. Louis Park and Lake Minnetonka cars. Ahead is the Plaza Hotel, home of the WLOL studios. The Star-Tribune view on the opposite page is from the Plaza's roof looking south.





Above left: A northbound Bryant car enters the Bottleneck, passing the Thomas Lowry memorial at far left. Wilbur Whittaker photo.

Above: A southbound PCC passes Ridgewood Avenue, a half block north of Franklin Avenue. Theodore Taetsch photo.

Left: The motorman of a southbound car tiptoes through the periodically flooded 22nd Street intersection, hoping the motors don't short out. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Opposite top: Remember brick streets? This is 22nd Street looking west down the hill toward Lyndale. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Opposite bottom: Lyndale Avenue was still lined with American elms when Norton & Peel took this view looking north from 25th Street in 1949. Minnesota Historical Society collection.





The Bryant line used Selby-Lake rails to make the two-block shift from Lyndale to Bryant.

Above: The switch to turn left from Lake onto Lyndale is visible at lower right. Ed Nelson photo.

Below: PCC 394 turns from Bryant onto Lake Street.



Above: The TCRT Safety Department posed this photo at 38th and Bryant to illustrate how a sequence of bad things can unfold. The auto at right has broken the law by passing a stopped streetcar on the right. That endangered the kids crossing the street and surprised the left turning auto which has slammed on its brakes, causing the following streetcar to rear end it.

The 38th Street bus is laying over in the streetcar wye, mostly used to turn rush hour trippers. Note the coal, salt and sand bins along the curb.



Above right: The streetcar has hit something just north of 47th and Bryant. The line is backed up while the police gather information. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Bottom right: A northbound car crests the hill at 48th Street. Jim Kreuzberger photo.



Above left: The line split at 50th and Bryant, with the Penn car turning right and the cars to 56th Street continuing straight. Bill Olsen photo.

Bottom left: This short-line car has turned right from Bryant onto 50th and is backing into the wye to reverse direction. George McLane photo.

Above: This is the north end of the Bryant Avenue bridge over Minnehaha Creek, showing the overlapping gauntlet track. Jim Kreuzberger photo.



Above left: A northbound car climbs away from the Minnehaha Creek bridge. John Stern photo.

Below left: This is the south end of the Bryant bridge at 53rd Street. Don Ross photo.

Above: The south end of the Bryant bridge. Jim Kreuzberger photo.



Above: Cruising down Bryant at 55th Street. Don Ross photo.

Below: Laying over on the wye at 56th Street.



Above: End of the line. The streetcar has pulled across 56th Street and is about to back into the wye to take layover. Ed Nelson photo.

Below: In 1946 the intersection of 54th and Penn was torn up for street work, so Bryant-Penn cars wye'd out at 50th and Penn. Double ended lightweight #3 shuttled on Penn between 50th and 54th. It was the car's last assignment and scrapping followed in 1949. Bob Schumacher photo.





At 50th and Penn the Bryant line met the end of the Oak-Harriet, creating a transfer opportunity that probably wasn't used much. For a short time beginning in 1948, TCRT experimented with a crosstown bus on 50th Street.

Above: An Oak-Harriet car pulls out of the wye as another arrives.

Below: An Oak-Harriet cars turns onto 50th, headed for downtown. Ed Nelson photo.



Above: An Oak-Harriet car lays over on the wye in Penn Avenue north of 50th Street.

Below: From 50th to 54th the line was single track. This is a southbound car at 51st Street. Cliff Scholes photo.



The Bryant-Penn cars were confronted by a series of short, steep hills. Notable was the drop down to Minnehaha Creek on Penn Avenue. Here are two views by Bob Schumacher (top) and Frank Butts (bottom).





This is the wye at 54th and Penn, reached in 1927.

Left: A PCC has pulled through the 54th intersection and is about to back into the wye. John Stern photo.

Below left: The same car backs into the wye on 54th. John Stern photo.

Below: Layover done, a car turns onto Penn for the trip back downtown.





Trolley fans stake out the north end of the Minnehaha Creek bridge.



A southbound car crosses Minnehaha Creek and approaches the south end of the bridge at 53rd Street.



The PCC car at right has derailed as a southbound Bryant-Penn car starts its turn from 50th Street onto Penn Avenue. We don't know if the PCC just came from 54th and Penn, or is an Oak-Harriet car about to back into the wye.



This is the notorious 54th and Penn wye, located a 6 percent grade when the other three legs of the intersection were level. Eugene Van Dusen photo.



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